



MINUTES

February 7, 2019

I. Call to Order

This Regular Meeting of First 5 Imperial was called to order at 3:40 p.m. by Commissioner Castillo, acting Chair. The meeting was held at the Imperial County Administration Building Meeting Room C/D which is located at 940 W. Main Street in El Centro, California, whereby a quorum was established.

II. Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

- Ray Castillo
- Yurii Camacho
- Becky Green
- Fred Miramontes
- Danila Vargas

Commissioners Absent:

- Barbara Deol
- Joong Kim
- Peggy Price
- Karla Sigmond

Staff:

- Julio C. Rodriguez
- Bea Duran

III. Public Comment

Crystal Duran, County Librarian, highlighted the array of services the County library offers to young children in support of early literacy development. She stated that the Raise a Reader initiative offers weekly programs for infants and toddlers, ages 0 to 5, at each of the library sites which are located in Heber, Holtville, Calipatria and Salton City. Ms. Duran noted that this is the only public library system in the valley that is providing weekly programming for the 0-5 population, and she thanked the Commission for their support.

Pat Ureña from the City of El Centro Community Services Department presented information about the Stepping Stones Program. The Stepping Stones Program offers services to children ages 0 to 5 and their parents at the El Centro Community Center, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Pavilion, and the Conrad Harrison Gym. Programs that are offered include crafts, sensory activities, music, dance, a storytelling program, and baby yoga. Sports development activities for young children are offered at the Conrad Harrison Gym and the MLK facility. Ms. Ureña stated that staff is receiving training in using several curriculums such as the Catch Program and the Pre-School Sparks Program, and is also being trained on using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. The Stepping Stones Program is working in collaboration with the Red Cross to provide CPR classes for parents in anticipation of having the aquatic center opening soon. Ms. Ureña also talked about the work they are doing recruiting individuals to do internships at the Community Center. Ms. Ureña extended an invitation for Commissioners to visit their state-of-the-art facilities.

IV. Adoption of Minutes

A motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 6, 2018 was made by Commissioner Miramontes and it was seconded by Commissioner Green; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

V. Consent Calendar Items

Commissioners considered approval of the consent calendar items. A motion to approve the Consent Calendar Items for the meeting of February 7, 2019, as presented was made by Commissioner Miramontes and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

VI. Administrative Report (Julio Rodriguez, Executive Director)

1. Selection of Community Development Mini-Grant FY 2019-2020 Step 1 Applicants: Copies of the Statements of Interest to Apply were reviewed at this time. Mr. Rodriguez advised that Step 1 of the mini-grant process identified 6 applicants who submitted a Statement of Interest to Apply. It was noted that funds for this grant are limited to \$100,000 total for funding cycle 2019-2020.

At this time, Commissioners proceeded to disclose conflicts of interest with agencies who submitted a Statement of Interest to Apply for a mini-grant. Commissioner Castillo declared having a conflict with the Imperial County Free Library. No other conflicts were declared by the remaining Commissioners. Members agreed to step out of the room during the discussion of the proposed projects.

Mr. Rodriguez proceeded by providing a summary of each Statement of Interest to Apply that was received; discussion ensued:

Calipatria Unified School District is requesting \$7,000 for the Family Biliteracy Nights Project. The funds will be used towards the purchase of materials and supplies to promote literacy and vocabulary development for families that are bilingual, and who live within the Calipatria Unified School District. The agency is proposing 2 sessions with 10 classes per session. Books will be provided to families attending the sessions. An assessment will be conducted with all participating children. The concern expressed with this project is that the school district may not have the experience working with children within the age range of 0 to 5 years as it relates to using the correct developmental tools and resources for this age range.

The City of El Centro, Community Services Department, is requesting \$25,000 to fund the Stepping Stones Project. The Stepping Stones Project is designed for children 0-5 and their parents or caregivers which intends to help build a bond between the child and the parents. Weekly programs that address various themes will be offered within the City of El Centro's community facilities at an affordable rate. Themes include social interaction with crafts, sensory play, storytelling, music and sports. The Project will also offer some parent components such as health, nutrition and CPR classes. The concern noted with this Project is the issue of supplantation; the Stepping Stones Project is currently funded by the City of El Centro. If approved, the Commission will need to be clear where funds will be appropriated. Another concern noted was regarding the rate charged to families who participate in the program. The City of El Centro Community Services Department will need to address the areas of concern under Step 2 of the Community Development Mini-Grant application, and clarify the issue of supplantation.

Imperial County Child Abuse Prevention Council is requesting \$25,000 to fund the Little Steps program. The agency is proposing to hold parent sessions using the Incredible Years curriculum which is an evidence-based curriculum in child development. The Imperial County CAP Council has many years of experience providing these trainings, and addressing parents with children within the 0 to 5 age group. The project also intends to use the Kit for New Parents, as a training component for parents. This program is a continuance of previous mini-grant funded programs.

Commissioner Castillo stepped out of the room at this time.

Imperial County Free Library is requesting \$21,150 to create a new Family Place Library in the City of Holtville County library site. This project intends to address a systems-change effort by changing the environment within the library where it is appropriate to serve children 0 to 5. Funds will be used to train staff in addressing the 0 to 5 aged population and to purchase materials. This is a sustainable program; an investment that the agency can sustain over time. The Commission has previously funded two other Family Place library branches in the cities of Calipatria and in Heber.

Commissioner Castillo was summoned into the room at this time.

Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District is requesting \$25,000 to fund a bilingual nutrition program. The agency identified three areas it will be addressing, 1) change in families eating habits and lifestyles; 2) to better educate families on nutrition and food choices at home; and 3) to improve school and student health outcomes. The concerns noted with this project is the agency's non-traditional venue of providing this type of service specific to children ages 0 to 5; the type of curriculum or tools it is proposing. Concerns with recruitment of the population were also discussed. Commissioners noted that very little detail was provided in the Statement.

Spread the Love Charity is requesting \$25,000 to fund the Homeless Families and Children, Housing and Stabilization Support Program. The agency is requesting funds to support families that are identified as being homeless. The program intends to benefit families by providing direct cash and in-kind assistance to households with limited incomes including providing advocacy, parenting support and a service safety net for the families. The concern noted with this Project was the ability of the agency to ensure that Commission funds would solely benefit families with children 0 to 5 years of age; limiting the scope of services provided by the agency. Also, data collection and reporting of these families could become an issue due to confidentiality policies. A major concern noted was the Project's intent to offer cash to families which the Commission does not support.

A motion to invite the Calipatria Unified School District to submit a mini-grant proposal was made by Commissioner Vargas and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion to invite the City of El Centro Community Services Department to submit a mini-grant proposal was made by Commissioner Camacho and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with 1 opposed (B.Green).

A motion to invite the Imperial County Child Abuse Prevention Council to submit a mini-grant proposal was made by Commissioner Vargas and it was seconded by Commissioner Green; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

Commissioner Castillo stepped out of the room at this time.

A motion to invite the Imperial County Free Library to submit a mini-grant proposal was made by Commissioner Miramontes and it was seconded by Commissioner Green; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried.

A motion made not to invite the Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District to submit a mini-grant proposal was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

A motion made not to invite the Spread the Love Charity to submit a mini-grant proposal due to the concern with the cash liability was made by Commissioner Miramontes and it was seconded by

Commissioner Green; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

Mr. Rodriguez advised that notifications will be sent out to the agencies, and further information will be provided on the Commission's website.

2. Request to Approve the Community Development Mini-Grant Guidelines FY 2019-2020, Step 2: Mr. Rodriguez reviewed the proposed Community Development Mini-Grant Guidelines. He advised that a minor change was made to the Cover Page which included a new section where agencies are asked to provide a brief summary of their proposed project. Another change noted on this Cover Page was the elimination of the identification of ethnicity of children served. Other changes to the guidelines included the dates.

A motion was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to approve of and release the Community Development Mini-Grant Guidelines, Step 2, FY 2019-2020 with the noted changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

3. Request to Approve the release of the RFP for General Grant Guidelines FY 2019-2021: Mr. Rodriguez provided a summary of the proposed Request For Proposal for General Grant Guidelines. He further advised of the changes as per recommendations established by Commissioners from previous meetings, and per counsel advise, which included changes to the language under the contract section, the ownership of documents, property rights, contractor's responsibilities section, an indemnification clause, and the arbitration process as well as changes to the dates.

A motion was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to approve of and release the RFP for General Grant FY 2019-2021 with changes; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

4. Request to Approve Agreement for Special Services for RFP Evaluator: Mr. Rodriguez sought approval to sign a contract with individuals for the purpose of providing an evaluation of the RFPs for the Commission; a brief review of the contract was made at this time. The agreement entails that the individuals will be engaged in providing a professional service, and the Commission will reimburse their services as evaluators at \$60.00 per hour. Mr. Rodriguez noted that a formula for evaluation of the proposals had been established. Further discussion continued regarding the provision of liability coverage for evaluators; Mr. Rodriguez stated that this coverage provides assurances for the evaluators but it was at the pleasure of the Commission whether or not to include the liability coverage as part of the Agreement.

A motion to approve the Agreement for Special Services for RFP Evaluator, excluding the liability coverage, was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Vargas; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

5. Request to Approve Budget Revision for the Raise a Reader Project: A request was submitted by the Imperial County Free Library for the Raise a Reader Project which entailed a budget revision of more than 10%, and a secondary request to increase funding of the Project's budget. Mr. Rodriguez explained that the budget revision represents an increase to the salary and fringe category of up to 36% of the overall budget with reductions to the operating supplies category, equipment purchases, travel and training costs, audit cost and indirect costs. The second request which is to increase the Project's budget by a minimum of \$5,700 was also discussed, and Crystal Duran, County Librarian, made a case for

consideration of the request. Discussion regarding programming for Year 2 funding of the RFP was addressed.

A motion to approve the budget revision request made by the Imperial County Free Library for the Raise a Reader Project was made by Commissioner Vargas and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with 1 abstention (R.Castillo).

A motion to deny the request for a budget increase for the Raise a Reader Project was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Camacho. Commissioners agreed that it was not in the best interest of the Commission to create a practice of providing increases. Having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with 1 abstention (R.Castillo).

6. Request to Approve Scope-of-Work change for the Nutrition-to-Go Project: The Imperial Valley Food Bank is requesting a change of scope to their mini-grant Nutrition-to-Go Project; the request is to decrease the number of children served from 450 to 300 and the number of parents served from 250 to 150. Handouts will be distributed to parents in order to meet the requirement of reaching 150 parents rather than reaching them through workshops. Mr. Rodriguez informed Commissioners that the individual who was working for the Project is no longer working with the Imperial Valley Food Bank; thus, no services have been provided. The agency expensed 20% of their budget during the first quarter. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he spoke to the grantee about terminating the contract; he felt the project was too ambitious. Although he did acknowledge that the food bank does very good work.

Commissioner Green advised that she would not have approved the request of providing handouts rather than offering the workshops to the parents. She is recommending that the Executive Director go back and talk to the Project to find out what they can really accomplish, no handouts. She further stated that the decision on behalf of the Project to terminate the contract would not affect future funding decisions.

Commissioner Vargas commented that at this point she didn't think the Project would be able to expense the \$25,000 award entirely due to the reductions and the amount of time remaining. Budget expenses for the first quarter need to be verified at this point. Direction will be given to the Fiscal Analyst regarding the verification of reported expenditures made by the Project.

A motion to deny the scope-of-work request made by the Imperial Valley Food Bank for the Nutrition-to-Go Project was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes. Direction was given to the Executive Director to go back and convey to the Imperial Valley Food Bank that the Commission will not approve the scope of work change; the Commission will recommend that the contract be terminated; and if the Project chooses not to terminate, it will have to move forward and complete the objectives as initially approved. The motion carried with all in favor.

7. Review of Proposed First 5 Imperial Policies: Mr. Rodriguez provided an introduction of the proposed Payroll Policy for the Commission. He indicated that he is not seeking action for approval of the policy at this time because the Payroll Policy still needs to be reviewed by a certified public accountant (CPA); the CPA may recommend further changes. He noted that staff is currently in the process of contracting with a certified public accountant. Mr. Rodriguez stated the following:
 - o the policy identifies payroll periods, it identifies those employees who are exempt and those that are non-exempt;
 - o time sheets are required to be submitted by all employees and are kept in the employee's file; the Executive Director reviews the time sheets for accurateness and tracks the hours of work, vacation, sick-leave, holiday hours, compensatory hours used and overtime hours accumulated;

- payroll checks are then produced by an accounting agency, the accounting agency takes care of printing the employees checks and making the necessary tax deductions; figures are confirmed by Commission staff.
- funds used to pay payroll are drawn from a bank account established by the Commission, not with the County Auditor;
- the Chairperson, Vice-Chair and the Executive Director have signatory authority. The Executive Director may sign all payroll checks except his own;
- Checks are distributed directly to the individual on a bi-weekly basis;
- the accounting agency is responsible for producing W-2 documents.

Commissioner Vargas commented that there is no mention about the process the Executive Director follows regarding the submission/tracking of his own time sheets. She is recommending that the policy include a designated person (the Fiscal Analyst) who will oversee time sheets submitted by the Executive Director. Mr. Rodriguez acknowledged that he will incorporate the language into the policy.

The policy will be reviewed by a certified public accountant and it will be brought back to the Commission for final approval at a later time.

Mr. Rodriguez presented two additional polices:

Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy
Injury and Illness Prevention Program

Mr. Rodriguez stated that legal counsel is recommending that the Commission approve of the two policies in order to move forward and conduct mandatory trainings that are required for employees; trainings will be presented to Commissioners as well but at a later time. He advised that the policies are standard procedures and they will be included as part of the development of the employee handbook.

A motion was made by Commissioner Green and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes to adopt the Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy and the Injury and Illness Prevention Program; having noted no further discussion or public comment, the motion carried with all in favor.

8. Funded Project Progress Report Update 1st and 2nd Quarter FY 2018-2019: Mr. Rodriguez provided a brief summary of the 1st and 2nd quarter progress reports for 11 RFP project grantees and 6 mini-grant projects. He noted that by the end of the second quarter RFP projects expensed 44% of their approved budgets, and mini-grants expensed 36% of their approved budgets. Projects have served over 4,200 children, 1,400 parents, 351 family members, only 1 medical provider, and 217 early care and education providers. The majority of services continue to be offered in the cities of Calexico, El Centro and Brawley.

Mr. Rodriguez advised that the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program reported no activities during the first quarter mainly because recruitment efforts took place during that time. He also noted that the event held by the UC Desert Research and Extension Center was successful; the Project reported that over 400 children 0 to 5 years of age participated. Mr. Rodriguez went on to highlight concerns in regards to the Imperial Valley Food Bank. Another concern identified was in regards to the focus of the trainings being conducted by the Imperial County Office of Education Quality Start Project.

VII. Commissioner Comments

No Commissioner comments were made at this time.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion adjourning the Commission meeting was made by Commissioner Camacho and it was seconded by Commissioner Miramontes. Having noted no further comments and by unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:42 pm. The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for April 4, 2019.